RULES

AND

DIRECTIONS

FOR

PLAYING

BACK-GAMMON.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

1798.

A Representation of The Back Gammon Table.

BACK-GAMMON.

RULES and DIRECTIONS

FOR

PLAYING THE GAME

OF

BACK-GAMMON.

ILLUSTRATED WITH

CALCULATIONS, CRITICAL CASES,

AND

GAMES.

"In what esteem are you with the vicar of the parish? can you play with him at BACK-GAMMON?"

Swift.

LONDON:

RULES

FOR

PLAYING THE GAME

OF

BACK-GAMMON.

THE origin and antiquity of this game has been much difputed by the French and Germans, each claiming it as the particular invention of their different countries. Our own countrymen infift on its being of *Welfh* origin, as its name fignifies in that language *Little Battle*. But it is not the province of the Editor to difpute with antiquarians matters of fuch little moment to the admirers of this pleafant amufement: all feem to agree in the point moft effential, that it is next, for ingenuity, to the manly and fcientific game of Chefs.——It is played

with .dice, by two perfons, on a table, *(a representation of which, with the moft common manner of placing the men, is given as a frontifpiece)* which is divided into two parts, and on it are 24 black and white fpaces called points. Each adverfary has 15 men, black and white, to diftinguifh them, and they are difpofed of in the following manner :

Suppofing the game to be played into the right-hand table, two are placed upon the ace-point in the adverfary's table, five upon the fix point in the oppofite table, three upon the cinque point in the hithermoft table, and five on the fix point in the right-hand table. The grand object in this game is for each player to bring the men round into his right-hand table, by throwing with a pair of dice thofe throws that contribute towards it, and at the fame time prevent the adverfary doing the like. The firft beft

throw upon the dice is efteemed aces, be-
caufe it ftops the fix po'nt in the outer table,
and fecures the cinque in the thrower's ta-
ble ; whereby the adverfary's two men upon
the thrower's ace point cannot get out with
either quatre, cinque, or fix. This throw is
an advantage often given to the antagonift
by the fuperior player.

When he carries his men home in order to
lofe no point, he is to carry the moft diftant
man to his adverfary's bar point, that being
the firft ftage he is to place it on ; the next
ftage is fix points farther, viz. in the place
where the adverfary's five men are firft
placed out of his tables. He muft go on in
this method till all his men are brought home,
except two, when by lofing a point, he may
often fave the gammon, by throwing two
fours or two fives.

When a hit is only played for, he fhould
endeavour to gain either his own or adver-

fary's cinque point; and if that fails by his being hit by the adverfary, and he finds him forwarder than himfelf, in that cafe he muft throw more men into the adverfary's tables; which is done in this manner: He muft put a man upon his cinque or bar point; and if the adverfary neglects to hit it, he may then gain a forward game inftead of a back game: but if the adverfary hits him, he fhould play for a back game; and then the greater number of men which are taken up makes his game the better, becaufe by thefe means he will preferve his game at home: and then he fhould endeavour to gain both his adverfary's ace and trois points, or his ace and deuce points, and take care to keep three men upon the adverfary's ace point, that in cafe he hits him from thence, that point may remain ftill fecure to himfelf.

A back game fhould not be played for at the beginning of a fet, becaufe it would be

a great difadvantage, the player running the rifk of a gammon to win a fingle hit.

RULES FOR PLAYING AT SETTING OUT ALL THE THROWS ON THE DICE, WHEN THE PLAYER IS TO PLAY FOR A GAMMON OR FOR A SINGLE HIT *(a)*.

1. Two aces are to be played on the cinque point and bar point, for a gammon or for a hit. 2. Two fixes, to be played on the adverfary's bar point and on the thrower's bar point, for a gammon or for a hit. 3. † Two trois, to be played on the cinque point, and the other two on the trois point in his own tables, for a gammon only. 4. † Two, deuces, to be played on the quatre point in his own tables, and two to be brought over from the five men placed in the adverfary's tables for a gammon only. 5 † Two fours,

(a) The rules marked thus † are for a gammon only; thofe marked thus * are for a hit only.

to be brought over from the five men placed in the adverfary's tables, and to be put upon the cinque point in his own tables for a gammon only. 6. Two fives, to be brought over from the five men placed in the adverfary's tables, and to be put on the trois point in his own tables, for a gammon or for a hit. 7. Size ace, he muft take his bar point for a gammon or for a hit. 8. Size deuce, a man to be brought from the five men placed in the adverfary's tables, and to be placed in the cinque point in his own tables, for a gammon or for a hit. 9. Six and three, a man to be brought from the adverfary's ace point, as far as he will go, for a gammon or for a hit. 10. Six and four, a man to be brought from the adverfary's ace point, as far as he will go, for a gammon or for a hit. 11. Six and five, a man to be carried from the adverfary's ace point, as far as he can go, for a gammon or for a hit.

12. Cinque and quatre, a man to be carried from the adverſary's ace point, as far as he can go, for a gammon or for a hit. 13. Cinque trois, to make the trois point in his table, for a gammon or for a hit. 14. Cinque deuce, to play two men from the five placed in the adverſary's tables, for a gammon or for a hit. 15. † Cinque ace, to bring one man from the five placed in the adverſary's tables for the cinque, and to play one man down on the cinque point in his own tables for the ace, for a gammon only. 16. Quatre trois, two men to be brought from the five placed in the adverſary's tables, for a gammon or for a hit. 17. Quatre deuce, to make the quatre point in his own tables, for a gammon or for a hit. 18. † Quatre ace, to play a man from the five placed in the adverſary's tables for the quatre; and for the ace, to play a man down upon the cinque point in his own tables, for a gammon only

19. † Trois deuce, two men to be brought from the five placed in the adverfary's tables, for a gammon only. 20. Trois ace, to make the cinque point in his own tables, for a gammon or for a hit. 21. † Deuce ace, to play one man from the five men placed in the adverfary's table for the deuce; and for the ace to play a man down upon the cinque point in his own tables, for a gammon only. 22. * Two trois, two of them to be played on the cinque point in his own tables, and with the other two he is to take the quatre point in the adverfary's tables. 23. * Two deuces, two of them are to be played on the quatre point in his own tables, and with the other two he is to take the trois point in the adverfary's tables. By playing thefe two cafes in this manner, the player avoids being fhut up in the adverfary's tables, and has the chance of throwing out the tables to win the hit. 24. * Two fours, two of them are to take

the adverfary's cinque point in the adverfary's-tables, and for the other two, two men are to be brought from the five placed in the adverfary's tables. 25. * Cinque ace, the cinque fhould be played from the five men placed in the adverfary's tables, and the ace from the adverfary's ace point. 26. * Quatre ace, the quatre to be played from the five men placed in the adverfary's ace point. 27. * Deuce ace, the deuce to be played from the five men placed in the adverfary's tables, and the ace from the adverfary's ace point.

The three laft chances are played in this manner: becaufe an ace being laid down in the adverfary's tables, there is a probability of throwing deuce ace, trois deuce, quatre trois, or fize cinque, in two or three throws; either of which throws fecures a point, and gives the player the beft of the hit.

CAUTIONS, &c.

THE player muft underftand by the direc-
tions given to play for a gammon, that he is
to make fome blots on purpofe, the odds
being in his favour that they are not hit : but
if it fhould happen that any blot is hit, as in
this cafe there will be three men in the ad-
verfary's tables, he muft then endeavour to
fecure the adverfary's cinque, quatre, or
trois point, to prevent a gammon, and muft
be very cautious of his fourth man's not
being taken up.

He muft not crowd his game at any time
if he can help it; that is to fay, he fhould
not put many men either upon the trois or
deuce points in his own tables, being the
fame as lofing thofe men, not having them
in play. Befides, by crowding the game,
and attempting to fave a gammon, the player
is often gammoned. His game being crowded

in his own tables, the adverfary has room to play as he thinks proper.

The following calculations will fhow the odds of entering a fingle man upon any certain number of points; and accordingly the game fhould be played.

It is neceffary to know that there are thirty-fix chances upon two dice, and the points that are upon thefe thirty-fix chances are as follow:

Viz.				Points.
2 Aces	-	-	-	4
2 Deuces	-	-	-	8
2 Trois	-	-	-	12
2 Fours	-	-	-	16
2 Fives	-	-	-	20
2 Sixes	-	-	-	24
6 And 5 twice	-	-		22
6 And 4 twice	-	-		20

Carried forward 126

				126
6 And 3 twice	-	-	18
6 And 2 twice	-	-	16
6 And 1 twice	-	-	14
5 And 4 twice	-	-	18
5 And 3 twice	-	-	16
5 And 2 twice	-	-	14
5 And 1 twice	-	-	12
4 And 3 twice	-	-	14
4 And 2 twice	-	-	12
4 And 1 twice	-	-	10
3 And 2 twice	-	-	10
3 And 1 twice	-	-	8
2 And 1 twice	-	-	6

Divide by 36)294(8

and it proves, that upon an $\qquad$ 288

average the player has a right $\qquad$

to 8 points each throw. $\qquad$ 6

The chances upon two dice calculated for Back-gammon are as follow:

2 Sixes	-	-	-	1
2 Fives	-	-	-	1
2 Fours	-	-	-	1
2 Trois	-	-	-	1
2 Deuces	-	-	-	1
† 2 Aces	-	-	-	1
6 And 5 twice	-		-	2
6 And 4 twice	-		-	2
6 And 3 twice	-		-	2
6 And 2 twice	-		-	2
† 6 And 1 twice	-		-	2
5 And 4 twice	-		-	2
5 And 3 twice	-		-	2
5 And 2 twice	-		-	2
† 5 And 1 twice	-		-	2
4 And 3 twice	-		-	2
4 And 2 twice	-		-	2
† 4 And 1 twice	-		-	2
3 And 2 twice	-		-	2
† 3 And 1 twice	-		-	2
† 2 And 1 twice	-		-	2

$$\overline{36}$$

As it may feem difficult to find out by this table of thirty-fix chances what are the odds of being hit upon a certain or flat die, let the following method be purfued.

The player may obferve in the table that what are thus † marked are,

† 2 Aces - - -	1
† 6 And 1 twice - -	2
† 5 And 1 twice - -	2
† 4 And 1 twice - -	2
† 3 And 1 twice - -	2
† 2 And 1 twice - -	2

Total 11

When deduced from 36

There remains 25

So that it appears it is twenty-five to eleven againft hitting an ace upon a certain or flat die.

The above method holds good with refpect

to any other flat die. For example, what are the odds of entering a man upon 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 points?

Anſwer:

To enter it upon	for againſt			for	ag.	
1 point is	11	to	25	Or about 4	to	9
2 points	20	-	16	- 5	-	4
3 -	27	-	9	- 3	-	1
4 -	32	-	4	- 8	-	1
5 -	35	-	1	- 35	-	1

The following table ſhows the odds of hitting with any chance, in the reach of a ſingle die:

To hit upon	for		againſt	for		ag.
1 is	11	to	25	Or about 4	to	9
2 -	12	-	24	- 1	-	2
3 -	14	-	22	- 2	-	3
4 -	15	-	21	- 5	-	7
5 -	15	-	21	- 5	-	7
6 -	17	-	19	- $8\frac{1}{2}$	-	$9\frac{1}{2}$

The odds of hitting with double dice are
as follow :

To hit upon		for	against		for	ag.
7	is	6 to 30		Or about 1	to 5
8	-	6 - 30		-	1 - 5
9	-	5 - 31		-	1 - 6
10	-	3 - 33		-	1 - 11
11	-	2 - 34		-	1 - 17
12	-	1 - 36		-	1 - 35

How to find out the odds of being hit
upon a fix, by the table of thirty-fix chances :

2 Sixes	-	-	-	1
2 Trois	-	•	•	1
2 Deuces		-	-	1
6 And 5 twice			-	2
6 And 4 twice			-	2
6 And 3 twice			-	2
6 And 2 twice			-	2
6 And 1 twice			-	2

Carried forward 13

Brought forward 13

5 And 1 twice	-	2
4 And 2 twice	-	2

17

Which deducted from 36

There remains 19

By which it appears to be 19 to 17 against being hit upon a six.

The odds on the hits :

2 Love is about	-	-	5 to 2
2 to 1 is	-	- -	2 - 1
1 Love is	-	- -	3 - 2

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PLAYER TO BEAR HIS MEN.

IF a player has taken np two of the adver-fary's men, and happens to have two, three, or more points made in his own tables, he fhould fpread his men, that he either may

take a new point in his tables, or be ready to hit the man which the adverſary may happen to enter. If he finds upon the adverſary's entering, that the game is upon a par, or that the advantage is on his own ſide, he ſhould take the adverſary's man up whenever he can, it being 25 to 11 that he is not hit: except when he is playing for a ſingle hit only; then, if playing the throw otherwiſe gives him a better chance for it, he ought to do it.

It being five to one againſt his being hit with double dice, he ſhould never be deterred from taking up any one man of the adverſary's.

If he has taken up one of the adverſary's men, and ſhould happen to have five points in his own tables, and forced to leave a blot out of his tables, he ſhould endeavour to leave it upon doublets preferable to any other chance, becauſe in that caſe the odds

are 35 to one that he is not hit; whereas it is only 17 to one but he is hit upon any other chance.

When the adversary is very forward, a player should never move a man from his own quatre, trois, or deuce points, thinking to bear that man from the point where he put it, as nothing but high doublets can give him any chance for the hit. Instead of playing an ace or a deuce from any of those points, he should play them from his own size or highest points, so that throwing two fives, or two fours, his size and cinque points being eased, would be a considerable advantage to him; whereas had they been loaded, he must have been obliged to play otherwise.

It is the interest of the adversary to take up the player as soon as he enters. The blot should be left upon the adversary's lowest point; that is to say, upon his deuce

point rather than upon his trois point; or upon his trois point rather than his quatre point; or upon his quatre point preferable to his cinque point, for a reason before mentioned; all the men the adversary plays upon his trois or his deuce points are deemed lost, being greatly out of play; so that those men not having it in their power to make his cinque point, and his game being crowded in one place and open in another, the adversary must be greatly annoyed by the player.

If the player has two of the adversary's men in his tables, he has a better chance for a hit than if he had more, provided his game is forwarder than that of his antagonist's; for if he had three or more of the adversary's men in his tables, he would stand a worse chance to be hit.

When a player is running to save the gammon, if he should have two men upon

his ace point, and several men abroad, although he should lose one point or two in putting his men into his tables, it is his interest to leave a man upon the adversary's ace point, because it will prevent his adversary from bearing his men to the greatest advantage, and at the same time the player will have a chance of the adversary's making a blot, which he may chance to hit. However, if a player finds upon a throw, that he has a probability of saving his gammon, he should never wait for a blot, as the odds are greatly against his hitting it, but should embrace that opportunity.

HOW TO CALCULATE THE ODDS OF SAVING OR WINNING THE GAMMON.

Suppose the adversary has so many men abroad as require three throws to put them into his tables, and at the same time that the player's tables are made up, and that he has

taken up one of the adverfary's men; in this cafe, it is about an equal wager that the adverfary is gammoned. For in all probability the player has bore two men before he opens his tables, and when he bears the third man, he will be obliged to open his fize or cinque point. It is then probable, that the adverfary is obliged to throw twice before he enters his men in the player's tables, twice more before he puts that man into his own tables, and three throws more to put the men which are abroad into his own tables, in all feven throws. Now the player having 12 men to bear, he may be forced to make an ace or a deuce twice before he can bear all his men, and confequently will require feven throws in bearing them; fo that, upon the whole, it is about equal whether the adverfary is gammoned or not.

Suppofe a player has three men upon his

adverſary's ace point and five points in his own tables, and that the adverſary has all his men in his tables, three upon each of his five higheſt points. Has the player a probability of gammoning his adverſary or not?

	Points
For bearing three men from his 6th point is - - - - -	18
From his 5th point - - -	15
From his 4th point - - -	12
From his 3d point - - -	6
From his 2d point - - -	9
In all	60
Bringing his three men from the adverſary's ace point to his ſize point in his own tables, being 18 points each, and making together -	54
There muſt remain - - -	6

It is plain from this calculation, that the player has much the beſt of the probability

of the gammon, exclusive of one or more blots which the adversary is liable to make in bearing his men, supposing at the same time the throws to be upon an equality.

Suppose two blots are left, either of which cannot be hit but by double dice; one must be hit by throwing eight and the other by throwing nine; so that the adversary has only one die to hit either of them? What are the odds of hitting either of them? The chances of two dice being in all - 36

The chances to hit 8 are 6 and 2 twice   2
5 and three twice   -   -   -   -   2
2 Deuces   -   -   -   -   -   1
2 Fours   -   -   -   -   -   1
The chances to hit 9 are 6 and 3 twice   2
5 and 4 twice   -   -   -   -   2
2 Trois   -   -   -   -   -   1

For hitting in all   -   -   -   -   11
Chances for not hitting, remain   -   25

So that the odds are 25 to 11 againſt hitting either of theſe blots.

This method may be taken to find out the odds of hitting three, four, or five blots upon double dice; or blots made upon double and ſingle dice at the ſame time. After knowing how many chances there are to hit any of thoſe blots, they muſt be added all together, and then ſubtracted from the number 36, which are the chances of the two dice, and the queſtion is ſolved.

A CRITICAL CASE FOR A BACK-GAME.

SUPPOSE the fore-game to be played by A, and that all his men are placed as uſual; B has fourteen of his men placed upon his adverſary's ace point and one man upon his adverſary's deuce point, and B is to throw. Who has the beſt of the hit?—*Anſwer:* A has the beſt of it, gold to ſilver: becauſe, if B does not throw an ace to take his adver-

fary's deuce point, which is 25 to 11 againſt him, A will take up B's men in his tables, either ſingly or to make points ; and then if B ſecures either A's deuce or trois point, A will put as many men down as poſſible, in order to hit, and thereby get a back-game. It is evident that the back-game is very powerful; conſequently, whoever practiſes it muſt become a greater proficient at the game than he could by any other means.

ANOTHER CRITICAL CASE.

SUPPOSE A to have five men placed upon his ſize point, as many upon his quatre point, and the ſame number upon his deuce point, all in his own tables. At the ſame time, let us ſuppoſe B to have three men placed upon A's ace point, as many upon A's trois point, and the ſame number upon A's cinque point, in his own tables, and three men placed as uſual out of his tables. Who has the beſt of

the hit?—*Anfwer :* The game is equal, till B has gained his cinque and quatre points in his own tables; which if he can effect, and by playing two men from A's cinque point, in order to force his adverfary to blot by throwing an ace, which fhould B hit, he will have the beft of the hit.

A CASE OF CURIOSITY AND INSTRUCTION,

In which is fhown the probability of making the hit laft by one of the players for many hours, although they fhall both play as faft as ufual.—Suppofe B to have bore 13 men, and that A has his fifteen men in B's tables, *viz.* three men upon his fize point, as many upon his cinque point, three upon his quatre point, the fame number upon his trois point, two upon his deuce point, and one upon his ace point. A in this fituation can prolong it, as aforefaid, by bringing his 15 men home, always fecuring fix clofe points

till E has entered his two men, and brought them upon any certain point; as foon as B has gained that point, A will open an ace, deuce, or trois point, or all of them; which done, B hits one of them, and A taking care to have two or three men in B's tables, is ready to hit that man; and alfo he being certain of taking up the other man, has it in his power to prolong the hit almoft to any length, provided he takes care not to open fuch points as two fours, two fives, or two fixes, but always to open the ace, deuce, or trois points, for B to hit him.

A CRITICAL GAME TO PLAY.

Suppose A and B place their men for a hit in the following manner: A to have three men upon the fize point in his own tables, three men out of his tables upon the ufual point, and nine men upon his adverfary's ace, deuce, and trois points; that is, three

upon each: and suppose B's men to be placed in his own and his adversary's tables in the same order. So situated, the best player should win the hit. The game being so equal, that in this case the dice should be thrown for. Now if A throws first, he should endeavour to gain his adversary's cinque point: this being done, he should lay as many blots as possible, to tempt B to hit him, as it puts him backward, and A thereby gains an advantage. A should always endeavour to have three men upon each of his adversary's ace and deuce points; because when B makes a blot, these points will remain secure, and when A has bore five, six, or more men, A yet may secure six close points out of his tables, in order to prevent B from getting his man home, at which time he should calculate who has the best of the hit. If he finds that B is foremost, he should then try to lay such blots as may be taken

up by his adverfary, that he may have a chance of taking up another man, in cafe B fhould happen to have a blot at home.

LAWS OF BACK-GAMMON.

1. IF a man is taken from any point, it muft be played; if two men are taken from it, they alfo muft be played. 2. A man is not fuppofed to be played till it is placed upon a point and quitted. 3. If a player has only fourteen men in play, there is no penalty inflicted, becaufe by his playing with a leffer number than he is entitled to, he plays to a difadvantage for want of the deficient man to make up his tables. 4. If he bears any number of men before he has entered a man taken up, and which of courfe he was obliged to enter, fuch men fo borne muft be entered again in the adverfary's tables as well as the man taken up. 5. If

he has miſtaken his throw and played it, and his adverſary has thrown, it is not in the choice of either of the players to alter it, unleſs they both agree ſo to do.

FINIS.